



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

NYPD SGT. CHARGED IN 3 DIFFERENT CRIMINAL SCHEMES

Accused of marriage, bankruptcy, rent frauds

NEW YORK-- A New York City Police Department sergeant was indicted today for three separate criminal fraud schemes, including obtaining citizenship through a sham marriage, conspiring to take Housing and Urban Development subsidies he was not entitled to, and falsely reporting income and household expenses in a bankruptcy filing.

Sgt. Martin Peters' parents --Claudette Peters and Alfred Peters-- were also charged with participating in the HUD scheme.

The indictments were jointly announced by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent-in-Charge Martin D. Ficke, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York David N. Kelly and HUD Office of Inspector General Ruth Ritzema.

The police sergeant is charged with obtaining United States citizenship through a sham marriage by falsely claiming that he lived with an American citizen spouse in a marital union for the three years preceding the filing of his naturalization application.

According to the two-count complaint charging Sgt. Peters, Claudette Peters and Alfred Peters with housing subsidies fraud, Claudette Peters and Alfred Peters had an apartment located in Manhattan, for which they received Section 8 subsidies paid by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Tenants of Section 8 housing have to meet certain low-income eligibility requirements. In January 1999, Claudette Peters entered into a lease with a private landlord for a rent-stabilized apartment in Brooklyn and has been living there with her husband Alfred Peters. According to the complaint, Martin Peters has been living in his parents' subsidized Manhattan apartment with his wife since at least October 1998.

According to the complaint, Sgt. Peters and his wife together earned approximately \$66,000 to \$91,000 in salary during the years 2000 through 2004 and accordingly would have been ineligible to obtain HUD rental subsidies. During this time, Claudette Peters and/or Alfred Peters annually submitted statements to HUD as the purported tenants of the Manhattan apartment. In these statements, Claudette Peters and/or Alfred Peters failed to disclose that their son and his wife were

living in the Manhattan apartment. They also failed to report the salaries of Martin Peters and his wife. As a result of the scheme, Sgt. Peters and his wife paid rent in amounts ranging from \$223 to \$355 per month, and HUD paid out housing subsidies totaling approximately \$38,724.

The complaint further alleges that Sgt. Peters filed for bankruptcy protection in September 2002. His petition omitted his wife's income and claimed that his current monthly rent was \$849. According to the complaint, his monthly rent at the time was \$286. According to bankruptcy court records, in January 2003, Sgt. Peters was discharged from approximately \$79,000 in credit card and other debt as a result of the filing.

Sgt. Peters, 41, lives in Manhattan. Claudette Peters, 58, and Alfred Peters, 68, live in Brooklyn.

If convicted of housing subsidies fraud, Sgt. Peters, Claudette Peters and Alfred Peters each face a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000. In addition, if convicted of naturalization fraud, Sgt. Peters faces a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment, a fine of \$250,000 and the revocation of his United States citizenship. If convicted of bankruptcy fraud, Sgt. Peters faces a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

Under federal immigration law, criminal aliens are presumed to be deportable.

Assisting ICE on this case were members of the United States Marshals Service Regional Fugitive Task Force and the New York City Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney Serene K. Nakano will lead the prosecution.

The charges in the indictment and complaint are accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.